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ABSTRACT

Opinions about the conceptual dissertation are offered in seven colloquium papers by educational practitioners/scholars who have finished their dissertations over the past 5 years. Conceptual/interpretive dissertation research issues include finding a consistent language and research rationale for studies. In addition to an introduction by Noreen B. Garman, paper titles and authors are as follows: "Grounded Theory as It Relates to Educational Practice in Hospitals" (Maria E. Piartanida); "Grounded Theory as It Relates to Human Resources Supervision in an Alternative High School" (Susan P. Goodwin); "Using Continuous Comparative Analysis to Formulate Curriculum Construals for Gifted Education" (Joan C. Leukhardt); "Hermeneutic Interpretation as It Relates to Supervisory Practice" (Patricia E. Holland); "Dysfunctional Stereotypes Regarding Women and Promotion: Implications for Educational Remedy" (Bonnie Knapp Minick); and "The Story of a Teachers' Team Sabbatical: A Clinical Approach to Professional Development" (Monica F. Ondrusko). Appended are definitions of the following criteria for judging quality research: verity, integrity, rigor, utility, vitality, and aesthetics. The work of the Conceptual Research Study Group to which all the authors belong is also described. (SW)

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THE CONCEPTUAL DISSERTATION:

COMMENTARIES BY PRACTITIONERS AS INQUIRERS

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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
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INTRODUCTION

Noreen B. Garman, Ph.D.

I am especially proud to chair this colloquium today. I would like to thank the Council of Graduate Students in Education for their invitation to open this Eleventh Annual Colloquium with our presentation, called "The Conceptual Dissertation: Commentaries by Practitioners as Inquirers." The participants here are all members of a special group, the Conceptual Dissertation Study Group. They are all distinguished alumni, having finished their dissertations over the past five years. They think of themselves as educational practitioner/scholars who have taken on a responsibility for contributing to the area of dissertation research as well as to their own fields of study. Each of their dissertations is an exemplar work which has in its research, demonstrated significant aspects about the conceptual dissertation. Their insights and contributions will be presented this morning.

Perhaps a brief word about the study group is in order here. This group began their study in 1980. I was the first member. As their dissertation advisor, I was concerned about the state of educational research. I had been studying with Carl Hempel in the Philosophy of Science Department here at the University of Pittsburgh and exchanging informal materials with faculty at other universities who had similar interests in emerging concerns about educational research, whether what Thomas Kuhn calls the "paradigm shift" was really going on, and how to translate the state of debate to students. Most important was my concern for how to help students do rigorous research in the tide of debate

about "qualitative vs. quantitative" approaches. When we formed the study group we used the distinction, qualitative research, for awhile, but found it to be not very useful. We later took the AERA distiction, "conceptual research," as a descriptor. This seemed to fit the type of research we were about. (AERA had made the distinction for its dissertation awards between empirical approaches and conceptual approaches for its two catagories.) Since then, we've adapted the framework that Jonas Soltis and others have written which delineates at least three distinct paradigmatic catagories, rational/theoretic, interpretive, and critical theory. Our research would fit the "interpretive" mode.

During the study group meetings we were attempting to grapple with several issues in conceptual/interpretive dissertation research; most notably, a search for a constistent language and research rationale for each study, as way of doing quality research and a collective means of sharing our efforts. We found several concepts to be central to our research (for instance, the concept, "educational construal," which originally was adapted from Carl Hempel's idea, and which Joan Leukhardt will mention in her presentation, was a critical breakthrough to address the issue of the significant purpose of the research.) Eventually we were able to generate important criteria for quality research which came from our endeavors. (See Appendix A. "Criteria for Judging Quality Research.")

The group has presented at the regional conferences of the Northeastern Educational Research Association (NERA) and the

Pennsylvania Educational Research Association (PERA) and in 1985 we were invited to the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting (AERA) in Chicago by one of the SIG groups to present again. Each time we have presented we've thought it might be the last. We are again presenting at the annual conference of the curriculum reconceptualist known as the Journal of Curriculum Theorizing Conference with a different topic, hopefully extending the original work of the group. We continue to meet. There are currently four new members who are working on dissertations. The eight alumni and myself continue to identify with "the group" and some members meet with the new configuration because they are anxious, as new scholars, to gain a publication record. They see the group as a way to go beyond the graduate student/dissertation focus and extend the resources to include their publication goals. As one might imagine, the members are now enormously useful and supportive to the diverse needs of the individuals, whether it means completing a dissertation or publishing an article or a book.(See Appendix B. "The Conceptual Research Study Group" for a summary description of the nature of the group.)

Our presentation today is a brief overview of the kind of deliberation this group has during their meetings. We will not attempt to recap each dissertation. There is an attached audience handout which will extend each presentation. The handout gives the dissertation abstracts, key concepts that were important to that member and significant readings which the member felt were useful for her study in the group at the time. In some cases there is also a conceptual framework which generated from the results of the study. Each member will give

an abbreviated presentation of the research contribution of her study which helped to contribute to the group understanding of conceptual/interpretive research. As I mentioned earlier, the Appendices include a list of criteria used to judge quality research and a description of the study group.

At this time I would like to present the members of the panel. Each one, in her own way, has made a special contribution to our understanding of this type of dissertation research by the doing of it with such vigor. Each dissertation represents a meritorious and creative piece of work, and has been used as exemplar, from Arizona State University to Deakin University in Geelong, Australia. Most important, each member represents a role model of a fine scholar in the field of education. I am proud to be a part of the Conceptual Dissertation Study Group!

GROUNDED THEORY AS IT RELATES TO EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE IN HOSPITALS

Maria Piantanida, Ph.D.

In the Spring of 1978, I entered the world of hospitals as an educational practitioner. As I stepped through the doors of my particular organization, I felt myself sinking into a quagmire of confusing, often contradictory and incredibly complex impressions, ideas and expectations. In my struggle to make sense of this overwhelming experience, I read the literature on hospital education, spoke with educators in other hospitals, and spent hours talking with key personnel in my own organization. None of these efforts helped me to gain a broad enough perspective to understand what it meant to be an educator practicing in a hospital setting. The literature on this newly emerging professional role was sparse, difficult to locate and generally not research oriented. Each of my colleagues seemed to have a different set of job responsibilities and different views of how things should be done. Within my own hospital, it seemed that no two people agreed on what I could or should be doing. Although two and a half years passed before I could actually begin to work on my disseration research, the seeds of my study were planted during those early, frustrating months when I was trying to orient myself to the strange and fascinating world of hospital education.

One very strong motive in pursuing my research was to gain for myself a framework that would help me to assimilate large quantities of new information without plunging back into the quagmire of confusion. A second motivation was to find a way of communicating to others the nature of educational practice in hospitals. These motives illustrate what I consider to be a fundamental characteristic of conceptual research. Namely, the content or substance of the research is not a matter of detached curiosity to the researcher, but rather an issue of compelling concern. I see this characteristic of compelling concern as

an aspect of "research vitality," a concept Sue identified during her study and which she will discuss in her presentation.

Another characteristic of conceptual research is a certain "meandering" quality. By this I mean that very rarely does the research process proceed in a clear, linear fashion. The process by which I chose grounded theory as the method for my research helps to illustrate this point. When I began to conceptualize my overview, our Study Group was just getting started. We were at the very earliest stages of our learning and did not have a language for thinking about or explaining the type of research we wanted to do. We were familiar with grounded theory, primarily through the work of Phyllis Stern. And, at that time, we tended to use grounded theory as the umbrella concept for non-quantitative research. It wasn't until I really began to work through the process and other members of the Study Group began to develop different research strategies, that we began to see more clearly that grounded theory is only one of many potential methods for conducting conceptual research. The point that I would like to emphasize is that in our experience of conceptual research it was not possible to identify the content of the study and then select the research method. Rather, there was a constant interplay between content and method as the two were clarified and refined. It is easy to lose this perspective when describing the research process after the fact as we are doing today. In the case of my own research, the interplay between hospital education as the substance of my study and grounded theory as the method continued for approximately nine months as I developed and honed my overview. To give you a sense of the grounded theory method, I would like to share with you what has come to be known as my infamous pebble analogy.

After my overview was approved, I began to interview colleagues about their experiences as Directors of Education in hospitals. I taped the interviews, transcribed the tapes, analyzed the transcripts and began to generate hundreds

of phrases which described in concrete detail various aspects of the Directors' experiences. I also generated for each phrase a concept which seemed to capture the meaning being expressed by my colleagues. I entered the phrases and the concepts into an Apple computer and generated reams of printouts which I organized into three ring binders. During this phase of my research, I carried the binders with me day and night. Whenever anyone asked how my research was going, I would point to the binders and respond, "Well, I have all this--this stuff I've been gathering." It was virtually impossible for me to explain what I researching or the nature of my results. Just as my anxiety level was reaching the panic threshold, Joan began to talk about her data at a Study Group meeting. As I listened to her stuggle with the issue of managing her data, I suddenly had the image of gathering colorful pebbles from a variety of beaches.

With this image came several critical realizations or insights. First, if my data were comparable to colrful pebbles, I realized I had been collecting data since entering the practice of hospital education. The concept of what constituted my data expanded from the interview transcripts alone to nuggets of information I had been gleaning from the literature and from my interactions for nearly four years.

Second, I realized I had been fussing endlessly to sort the pebbles into neat piles according to size, shape, texture, color, beach of origin, etc. Despite the volumes of pebbles I had gathered, everything I wrote about the piles seemed terribly superficial and banal. Unconsciously I had become trapped in a dysfunctional stereotype of research in which I thought I had to account for all the pieces of data I had collected. With this realization, I was finally able to understand the significance of a definition of theory I had read several months earlier. According to George Kelly, a theory

> . . .is not a collection of information regardless of how carefully catalogued it may be. Nor is it an account of a sequence of events, no

matter how well authenticated. In essence a theory is simply a way of highlighting events so they may be viewed in some kind of perspective.

This led to the third, and most important insight of my pebble analogy. Just as pebbles can be used to create a mosaic, I could use my data to create a picture of hospital education. The significance of my research did not lie in accounting for all the individual pieces of data, but rather in the way those pieces could be used to convey to others the essence of hospital education as I construe it.

Let me try to illustrate how this pebble analogy applied in my own study. I was exploring the issues, problems and concerns that Directors of Education encountered as they first entered the role and over time. My intent was to generate concepts which would more clearly explain those issues, problems and concerns and then to generate principles that could help Directors deal with those difficulties. By the time I had my three ring binders full of print outs, I had data on issues related to the purpose, structure and financing of education in hospitals. Although I knew these data were important, I didn't know what to do with them. I had another set of data about reactions to education which Directors had encountered. Some reactions were positive; others were negative. From these data I generated the concept "receptivity to education" and suggested a continuum of receptivity ranging from hostile rejection to active acceptance. Directors had also alluded to experiencing a variety of different reactions to education within their own organization. From these data I generated the concept, "congruence of reactions to education." When I juxtaposed the concepts of receptivity and congruence, I created a matrix which led to a broader, umbrella concept--integration of education into the organization. Again I knew this concept was important, but still could not visualize the mosaic which would put hospital education into perspective.

It wasn't until I turned to the literature on professional practice that the

In the final chapter of my dissertation, I was able to move to another level of abstraction. By using the substantive theory of hospital education, the literature on professions and my own experiences as a practitioner and researcher, I was able to generate a formal theory of professional practice.

From this brief description of my study, I would like to summarize my perception of conceptual research. Human experience is the "raw material" with which the researcher begins to work. Because human experience is dynamic and ephemeral, a stable data record is needed. The interview transcripts I used is one example of a stable data record. Through analysis of and reflection on the records, the researcher begins to identify meaningful aspects of the experience. Concepts, as they are developed and juxtaposed, create a language for sharing the essential meanings of the experiences. As others are able to relate to the language and the meanings, naturalistic generalizations occur. This, for me, is the essence of the conceptual research process.

Although we can only begin to introduce the idea of conceptual research in our presentations today, I hope we will succeed in arousing your curiosity about this paradigm and encouraging you to explore it further.

Framework for Analyzing
The Practice of Directors of Education in Hospitals

Condition	Desired End	Principles for Purposeful Action
INTEGRATION	Enhance the extent to which education is integrated into the organization.	Assess the degree to which education is integrated into the organization.
		Recognize and defuse Disintegrative Conditions.
		Catalyze and foster Integrative Conditions.
PURPOSE	Create a stable purpose for education.	Clarify and differentiate the range of potential purposes which education can serve.
		Make explicit/overt the purpose(s) which education is to serve in the Director's particular hospital.
		Differentiate between the Primary and Secondary Purposes of Education and, when addressing Secondary Purposes, specify the nature of the contribution education can make.
		Integrate concepts related to the purpose of education into significant organizational documents.
STRUCTURE	Create a stable structure for education.	Gain the support of significant others in the organization.
		Design systems which facilitate the involvement of others in the educational decision making process.
		Identify sources of important information and strive to gain direct access to those sources.
		Establish networks which can augment and complement other, more formal channels of communication.
FINANCING	Create a stable financial basis for	Establish a budget for education as an integral component of the hospital's operating budget.
		Identify and monitor external forces which may impact on the fiscal policies of the hospital.
		Give evidence of the prudent and equitable use of resources.
		Account for the use of resources within the context of purposes to be served by education.

KEY CONCEPTS/DEFINITIONS

THEORY OF PRACTICE: A conceptual framework which enables practitioners to engage in purposeful action by understanding the conditions in which they work, deciding what constitutes desirable ends and formulating deliberate courses of action.

DIMENSIONS OF RIGOR IN NATURALISTIC RESEARCH: Credibility, auditability, confirmability and fittingness.

STABLE DATA RECORD: A permanent, unchanging depiction of events or experiences. Types of records include audio and/or video tapes, fugitive documents, transcipts, researcher field notes.

STUFF: Large numbers of data bits before the researcher has been able to grasp their meaning and put them into a usable perspective.

SLOGGING THROUGH THE STUFF: Immersing or steeping oneself in the data until the researcher can begin to resonate with its meaning. Often a prolonged phase of the research process characterized by intense anxiety, disorientation, doubt and dispair.

CONSTRUING THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH: The process of conceptualizing both the form and the content of the research results. A dimension of the research process characterized by intuition, intense concentration, profound irritation with external distractions, creativity and excitement.

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Grounded Theory as it Relates to Human Resource Supervision in An Alternative Public High School

by
Susan Poe Goodwin, Ph.D.
Northern Area Alternative High School

In 1979 I began working as a member of a very unique team of educators consisting of 3 teachers and a principal who were enlisted by the local Intermediate Unit to design and implement an alternative high school that would serve 8 school districts. The school quickly grew to include 7 teachers and the principal and was equipped to handle 115 students from the 8 participating districts. It was obvious very early in the program that the way this group of educators worked together was effective, creative, and satisfying. This group and the supervisory climate existing within it provided the basis from which my study evolved.

I decided to study what had already been described as an effective supervisory climate with the intent of discovering why it was so. Before choosing a methodology, I went to the literature to search for a theory of supervision that explained what was occurring within the alternative school group. I found no theory, but did find a set of 6 supervisory assumptions describing what Tom Sergiovanni calls Human Resources Supervision and at the same time describing the effective supervisory climate within the alternative school. Assumptions, unlike theories, however, cannot be tested, which automatically ruled out what the A.E.R.A. calls an empirical or theory testing work. It was at that time that I was introduced to grounded theory and the inductive or discovery mode of reasoning.

After further examining the methodology, I decided that the goal

of my study was to provide a conceptual framework that would explicate Sergiovanni's 6 assumptions into a substantive theory of supervision. To arrive at a conceptual framework I gathered data and used constant comparative analysis of that data until significant concepts emerged. When completed, the research resulted in a conceptual framework consisting of 6 strong supervisory concepts linked together by one pervading theme or core concept. The remainder of this presentation will detail the process of constant comparative analysis of data as it was used in the alternative school study to arrive at the conceptual framework which explicates Human Resources Supervision.

Constant Comparative Analysis

In the alternative school study, I preceeded the first round of data collection by developing a set of guiding questions. These were based on hunches I had concerning why the supervision in the group was effective. I was also careful, however, to allow room for the unexpected to arise. The data I gathered during that first round can be categorized as formal and informal data. The formal data included interviews with staff members, memos, directives, surveys, and written policy. The informal data included a journal that I kept throughout the data collection period, taped transcriptions of staff meeting, recorded observations of significant actions, and notes of private conversations with one or more members of the group. In a grounded theory study, all of this data is referred to as substantive data because it is taken from the substance of the area under study. As I gathered more and more, I began to rely more heavily on informal data. I discovered that a volunteered statement is less likely to reflect the researcher's biases. Information

gathered by first asking a formal question may, in its wording or manner of presentation solicit the researcher's desired response.

For the sake of uniformity I recopied all my pieces of data onto 3X5 cards and labeled each one with a key word taken from my guiding research questions. For example, I had a hunch that the non-hierarchical structure of the group was a factor in its effectiveness, so anything I saw in that first round of data that alluded to non-hierarchy was copied on a 3X5 card and labeled "non-hierarchy." Three other hunches formed the basis for coding in the first round, but anything that didn't fit those 4 was recopied and simply labeled "interesting." At the end of that first round, I had about 50 cards with my pre-conceived codes and over 200 labeled "interesting." The first level of comparative analysis was about to begin. I shuffled through the "interesting" cards looking for similarities or themes that might link one card to another. For example, I observed and labeled "interesting" the fact that teachers preferred doing their individual work in the company of others rather than alone. I also recorded as "interesting" the fact that teachers covered classes for each other and extensively did professional favors for each other. These 2 cards along with several others labeled "interesting" were clustered together and given a new code, "genuine affection."

All those first cards were either clustered under new codes, discarded, or held on to for further data collection. Those cards that I still believed to be significant even though they didn't cluster with any others led me back into the alternative school for a second round of data collection. In grounded theory, data collection and the analysis occur simultaneously as the research progresses. This second round differed from the first since the data itself gave direction to what I gathered. One card that I labeled

"interesting" that didn't cluster with any other card stated, "Principal is often not present in building." I was not ready to discard this data so returned to collect more information relating to this observation and came back with comments from the teachers regarding his absence, incidents that occurred during his absence, reasons for his absence, etc. These all clustered together and later formed sub-concepts of one of the final 6.

During this phase of the analysis I became aware of a shift in the control of the data collection and the research itself. Up to that point I perceived myself to be controlling the study, but I soon felt myself relinquishing control to the data. It was the data, not I, which determined the direction of the next round of data collection. With each round, I saw myself more as a collector and recorder as the data actually took over. My hunches and the research questions got us started, but meant nothing if they went unsupported in the data. I called this phenomenon in which the data assumes control and the study comes alive, research vitality. Research vitality, born from induction and constant comparative analysis is characteristic of grounded theory and conceptual research.

As the data directed me back into the alternative school looking for support in specific areas, I continued gathering more and more. This <u>specific</u> gathering or looking for data to strengthen a code is called selective sampling.

After several rounds of data collection, coding, and categorizing, theoretical coding began to occur. Theoretical coding takes place when a cluster of substantive codes exhibits characteristics that can be described by a theoretical term. The theoretical codes eventually formed the sub-concepts of the final 6. An illustration of this process occurs on p. 15 of the handout.

At some point in a grounded theory study as the researcher continually returns to the data to check and cross-check a code, the information starts to repeat itself. It is then that saturation has occurred and data collection within the substantive field is complete. In a grounded theory study, data is also gathered from outside the field, primarily in the literature. When I identified "shared leadership" to be a key sub-concept of Democratic Teaming I went to the literature to see if there is support there for the notion that sharing leadership within a group contributes to an effective supervisory climate. In the literature of supervision, group dynamics, and business management I found that support. If there is no support for a particular concept or sub-concept, it does not necessarily mean the concept is invalid. It may be a new concept that has not been previously researched. The information gathered from the literature is another form of data. It in no way superceeds the data gathered in the field. As Glaser has stated, "At some point in a grounded theory study, everything, substantive information, ideas, and literature all must be treated as data."

As the conceptual framework began to take form, I identified 6 strong concepts that described the effective supervisory climate existing in the alternative high school and at the same time explicating Segiovanni's 6 assumptions of Human Resources Supervision. I also identified a pervading theme that tied all the 6 concepts together. Again, it is Glasser who calls this the core concept. The core concept in the alternative school study, and the 6 supervisory concepts which are divided into 2 groups are presented on p. 14 of the handout as what we in the study group have chosen to call a construal. Joan will now further explain the nature of a construal and its role in conceptual research.

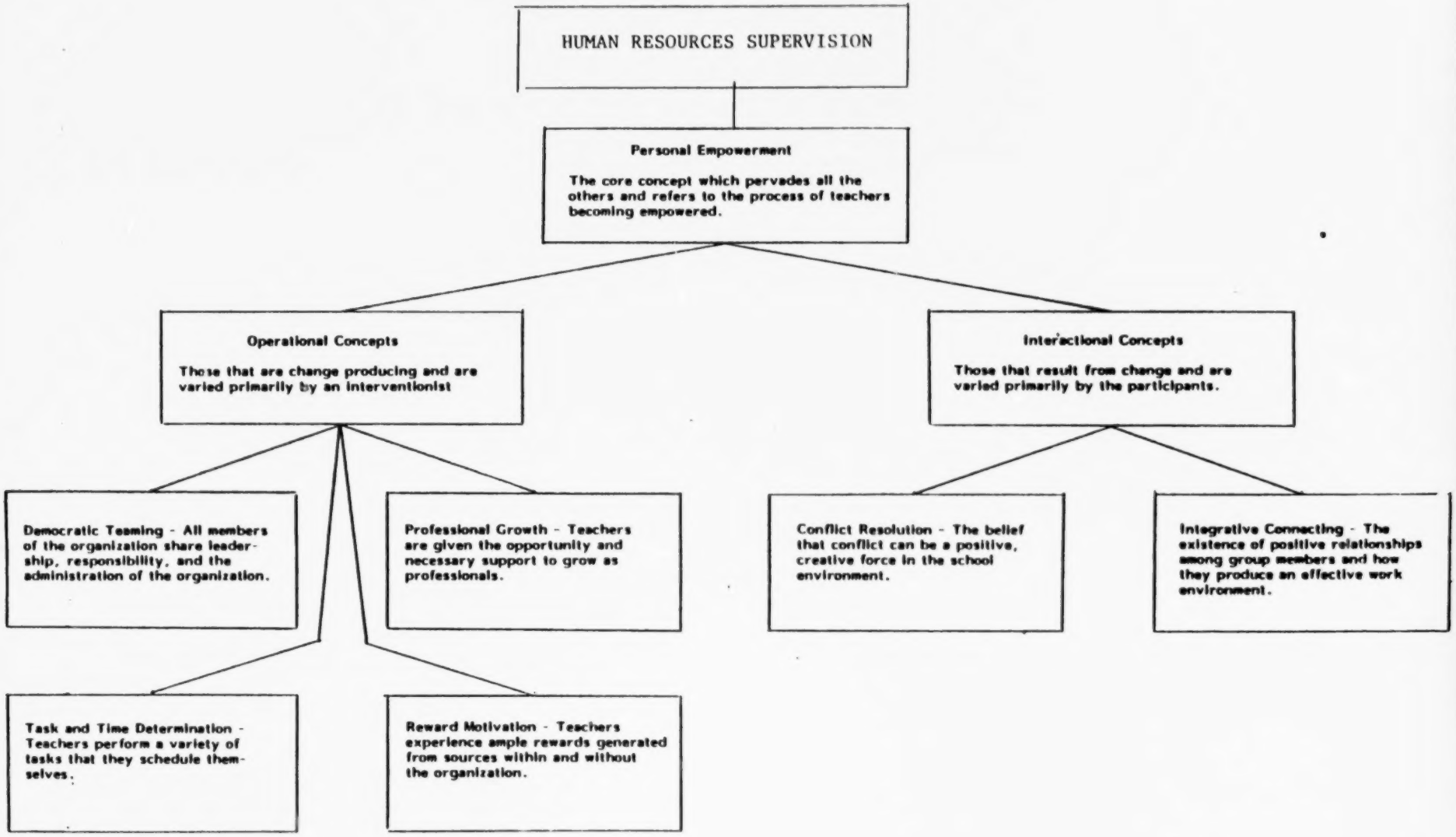
HUMAN RESOURCES SUPERVISION
Personal Empowerment
The core concept which pervades all the others and refers to the process of teachers becoming empowered.
Operational Concepts
Those that are change producing and are varied primarily by an interventionist
Interactional Concepts
Those that result from change and are varied primarily by the participants.
Democratic Teaming - All members of the organization share leadership, responsibility, and the administration of the organization.
Professional Growth - Teachers are given the opportunity and necessary support to grow as professionals.
Conflict Resolution - The belief that conflict can be a positive, creative force in the school environment.
Integrative Connecting - The existence of positive relationships among group members and how they produce an effective work environment.
Task and Time Determination - Teachers perform a variety of tasks that they schedule themselves.
Reward Motivation - Teachers experience ample rewards generated from sources within and without the organization.

ILLUSTRATION 1

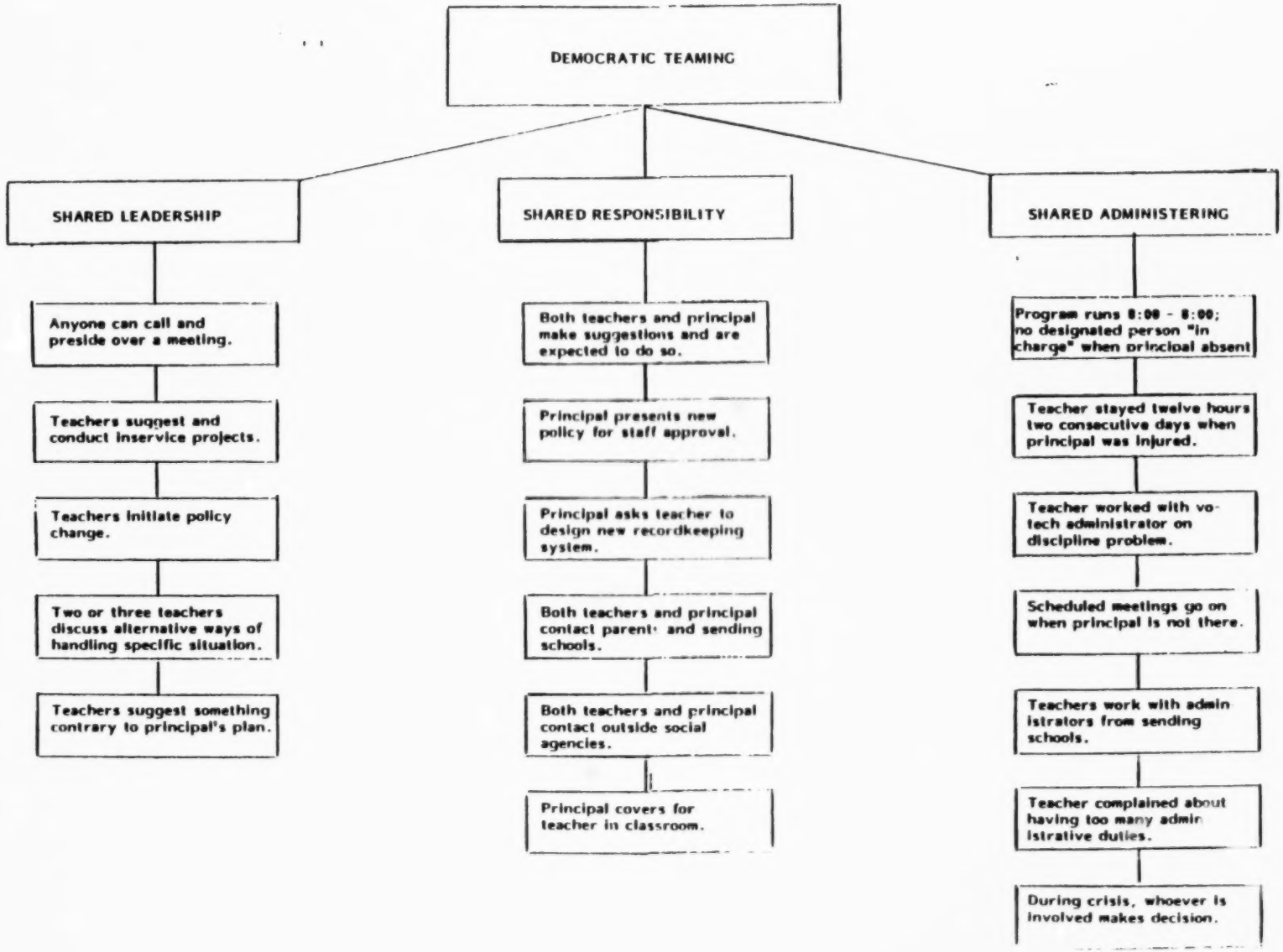
DEMOCRATIC TEAMING
SHARED LEADERSHIP
SHARED RESPONSIBILITY
SHARED ADMINISTERING
Anyone can call and preside over a meeting.
Teachers suggest and conduct inservice projects.
Teachers initiate policy change.
Two or three teachers discuss alternative ways of handling specific situation.
Teachers suggest something contrary to principal's plan.
Both teachers and principal make suggestions and are expected to do so.
Principal presents new policy for staff approval.
Principal asks teacher to design new recordkeeping system.
Both teachers and principal contact parents and sending schools.
Both teachers and principal contact outside social agencies.
Principal covers for teacher in classroom.
Program runs 8:00 - 8:00; no designated person "in charge" when principal absent
Teacher stayed twelve hours two consecutive days when principal was injured.
Teacher worked with vo-tech administrator on discipline problem.
Scheduled meetings go on when principal is not there.
Teachers work with administrators from sending schools.
Teacher complained about having too many administrative duties.
During crisis, whoever is involved makes decision.

ILLUSTRATION 2

KEY CONCEPTS/DEFINITIONS

CONSTANT COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: A rigorous resea ch procedure by which each piece of data is compared to each other piece in order to discover similarities and common properties. As these similarities pull various data into clusters, the future direction of further rounds of data collection is determined.

CORE CONCEPT: A unifying concept or main theme that ties together the concepts discovered in a grounded theory investigation.

EXPLICATION: A mode of research inquiry which proposes to expand a general idea into a more specific construct by using concepts and properties discovered in the research.

PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER: The term participant-observer can describe three different research roles. The first of these is the role of researcher assumed by a member of a group who has the power to intervene. The second type is an independent person who has joined the group solely to conduct a research investigation. The third, like the first, involves a regular member of the group who has duties to perform as a member of the organization which are independent of the research activities. Unlike the first role, however, this person is not an interventionist.

RESEARCH VITALITY: That characteristic of a grounded theory study which describes the degree to which the data rather than the researcher controls the future direction of the study.

SATURATION: That point in a grounded theory study when no new information surfaces as the data are collected and repetition begins to occur.

SELECTIVE SAMPLING: Returning to the data to further check or support an existing code.

SUBSTANTIVE CODES: Concrete codes lifted directly from the substantive data, often borrowing descriptive language from the data itself to form the code.

THEORETICAL CODES: Clusters of substantive codes that are described in more general theoretical terms.

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Using Continuous Comparative Analysis to Formulate Curriculum Construals For Gifted Education

by
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I. Background

As the director of a high school program for gifted students, I noticed patterns of participation in program activities which differed according to sex. After the fourth year of the program, I conducted a numerical study which documented those differences.

Female students elected to participate in smaller proportions than male students in the scientifically oriented academic enrichment and acceleration experiences.

Examples of that are that 45% of the eligible males elected the advanced science and mathematics classes, while 11% of the eligible females elected the advanced science and mathematics classes; 90% of the time spent on the computer was by males, while 10% was by females.

Since I believe that female students will be at a disadvantage in the future if they have by-passed educational opportunities in the sciences, I wanted to encourage them in a formal way to acquire the academic preparation which would allow them to consider nontraditional career options.

II. The Study

Based on that philosophy, I designed and conducted a program for 48 gifted female adolescents during the 1981-82 school year--a program they named the "Experience Excursion."

As the students and I participated in program activities, I acted as

a participant-observer/interventionist, gathering data for this case study from numerous sources: school records; biographical information; surveys; interviews; memos; my journal; student products, such as essays, poems, collages, and activity analysis forms; and pertinent literature. Data collection occurred in the natural school setting, thus the term naturalistic research can be used to describe the process.

III. Contributions

The intent of my study was to contribute to educators' understanding of gifted female students and to arrive at curriculum recommendations for them.

Because the resulting forms of my descriptions of students and recommendations for curriculum were conceptualizations, my study contributes to the research methodology called conceptual research. The conceptualizations took the form of educational construals.

IV. Data Collection and Analysis

I arrived at those conceptualizations by a long, tedious, non-linear process which will sound much easier and more sequential than it was.

Numerical and categorical data were subjected to quantitative analysis--numerous computer runs were made, cross-tabulations were done, percentages calculated. Other data were subjected to content analysis, interpreted to arrive at what Geertz calls "thick descriptions" (1973, p.6). Continuous comparative analysis, Maxwell and Maxwell's cycles of induction and deduction, was used to manage the data.

I entered my categories of data--emerging concepts--on large charts (borrowing from a previously established successful study mode for me). Entries were color-coded by grade level, and the Gestalt pattern of the

charts helped to give me an overall picture of relationships.

At a fairly early stage in the data analysis, I perceived three pairs of participant characteristics: high achievement/low achievement; high aspirations/low aspirations; orientation toward traditional values/ non-traditional values. I experimented with several charts, trying to group the participants according to combinations of those perceptions. But, besides its being unwieldy, I could not grasp any significance, other than to be sure that each participant possessed one trait from each pair.

I decided to try a computer analysis of the participants' personal data, grouping them according to a "traditional orientation" formula. I also had a computer analysis completed of the participants' personal data grouped according to grade levels. Neither of the computer results provided much illumination of the participants as to personal characteristics.

Details emerged from these analyses, but the personalities of the participants did not come alive. My understanding of them as individuals did not increase in meaningful ways, but I did arrive at recommendations for educational programs, which were later incorporated into "Principles" of Curriculum Development for Gifted Female Students".

Still feeling the need to describe participants more clearly, I grappled with another framework for perceiving gifted students. My and others' experiences in the field of education of the gifted (Manning, c. 1977) had resulted in a neat way of categorizing gifted students: High Achievers, Social Leaders, Creatives, and Rebels.

This classification system advanced my thinking in regard to describing the Experience Excursion participants, but it proved inadequate by itself.

There were other, as yet intangible, qualities which cut across those four behavior types, blurring the lines between them and not giving a clear picture of the students.

V. Educational Construals

I wanted to capture the nuances of their behavior that would give me clues to their unfathomed characteristics. Setting aside the boxes of collages, the rolls of charts, and the stacks of transcripts, forms, and computer printouts, I closed my eyes and created mental pictures of my participants. There was one with a direct gaze, another with a pinched face, another with wide eyes and a ready smile, and a fourth with downcast eyes. Eventually, all 48 paraded before me, projecting images of confidence, competitiveness, innocence or concern.

I began to conceptualize a new model, a second four-factor category system--this one based on evidence of <u>being</u> rather than of <u>behavior</u>. It seemed to me that exploring those characteristics within a construal derived from the four modes of bearing that I "saw"--certain attitudes, deportment, and carriage--could produce vivid pictures of the students.

At this point in my thinking, I leapt from my visualization of participants to Shakespeare's characterization of women: there was Portia, self-assured and purposeful; Cordelia, sweet and obedient; Miranda, naive and emotional; Desdemona, self-abasing and fearful.

These character types "clicked" with my overall impressions of the Experience Excursion participants. Their outward signs of motivation seemed to parallel the parts of Portia, Cordelia, Miranda, or Desdemona. I studied my list of participants and was encouraged that I could identify most of the students as one of the types. The fit became stronger as I

sorted interview transcripts and other documents into the four categories. Profiles of each type emerged, providing a meaningful characterization (an educational construal) which I called Interpretive Profiles of Four Types of Gifted Female Adolescents, and giving insight into some of their educational needs.

An educational construal is an interpretation used to discover and apply meaning. It is coined to suggest a manageable, useful, and logical educational device. According to Garman (1983), a conceptual framework is a common educational construal; one popular example being Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. Bloom has "construed" the cognitive domain as having six differentiated classes, organized for the purpose of writing educational objectives.

My conceptualization of the types of gifted female adolescents was a way for me to manage the complex data and to make it accessible to other educators. In addition to construing four profiles of adolescents, I construed six principles of curriculum development for them. The educational construals were generated by cogitating on my interpretations of the meaning of the data available for the study. My knowledge, based on my perceptions and conceptualizations, is what Stake (1978, p.6) calls "naturalistic generalization."

The process I have described was my solution for meeting the challenge of conceptual research, that of the existence of myriad details in a dynamic setting. I have wondered if I could have arrived at the construals without having done all the numerical analyses. My answer is "no"--those processes allowed the understanding and the incubation time necessary for the creative process.

VI. Postscript

As a postscript, I would like to return to consideration of the three pairs of traits that had emerged during my initial analysis of students:

A. high/low achievement

B. high/low aspirations

C. traditional/nontraditional orientation

After the Interpretive Profiles of Gifted Female Adolescents had been conceived, written, typed, and revised, I was struck by the revelation that the four interpretive profiles encompassed the three dichotomous traits that had been a part of my original thinking!

Portia possesses the qualities of high achievement, high aspirations, and nontraditional values; Cordelia contains the characteristics of high achievement, high aspirations, and traditional values; Miranda mirrors the properties of low achievement, high aspirations, and nontraditional values; and Desdemona displays the traits of high achievement, low aspirations, and traditional values.

	Portia	Cordelia	Miranda	Desdemona
High Achievement	X	X		X
Low Achievement			X	
High Aspirations	X	X	X	
Low Aspirations				X
Traditional		X		X
Nontraditional	X		X	

				Gifted Type				
Prototype	N	Appearance	Locus of Control	High Achiever	Social Leader	Creative	Rebel	Named Source of Encouragement
PORTIA	10	Dresses for the occasion; Strides confidently; makes eye contact	Inner-directed	Usually self-motivated to achieve well	Enthusiastic varsity athletic team member	Dedicated & inspired participant in the arts	Outraged protester of rules which counter her beliefs	"Myself"; "my father"
CORDELIA	12	Wears dressy clothes for most occasions walks hurriedly; furrowed brow	Outer-directed	Usually externally motivated to achieve well	Busy in extra-curricular activities (band, chorus, orchestra, newspaper, cheerleader)	Prodded & obliging participant in the arts	NONE	"My parents"; older siblings
MIRANDA	20	Dresses to fit her mood; varied pace; wide-eyed	Inner and Outer directed	Often does not achieve well; sometimes does achieve well	Belongs to marching group, newspaper staff, community-sponsored sports team	Passionate & performing participant in the arts	Capricious participant in protests	"My mother"; "my friends"
DESDEMONA	6	Dresses like the crowd; leans away from conversation; averts eyes	Outer-directed	Usually underestimates high grades; sometimes does not achieve well	Rarely involved in activities	Satisfied grower of plants	Compliant follower of protester	NO CONSENSUS

ILLUSTRATION

Chart of Interpretive Profiles
of Gifted Female Adolescents.

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KEY CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

CASE STUDY: A process for studying a specifically defined entity (person, group, program), usually conducted in a naturalistic setting.

CONCEPTUAL RESEARCH: Research of a nonquantitative, theoretical, historial, or review nature (AERA, 1982).

CONTENT ANALYSIS: A process of reducing anecdotal accounts and literature to its parts in order to determine underlying meaning. Units of content analysis can be quantified by noting their frequency.

CONTINUOUS COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: A method of organizing data according to similarities, differences, or patterns, and using deductive and inductive reasoning to form and to integrate concepts. (Maxwell & Maxwell, 1980).

EDUCATIONAL CONSTRUAL: A framework resulting from educational theorizing used for depicting complex information in manageable form for the purpose of carrying out educational practice. (Garman, 1983).

PARTICIPANT-INTERVENTIONIST: A participant-observer who goes beyond casual interacton with the other participants by initiating purposeful actions designed to create advantegeous situations for the study.

PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER: A person who interacts with the other participants in a naturalistic study for the purpose of collecting data about the participants and their interactions.

THICK DESCRIPTION: Description that begins with a "speck of behavior" (Geertz, 1973, p. 6), then allows for consideration of it in the context in which it is performed, and finally arrives at its possible meanings based on familiarity with the participants and their setting.

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HERMENEUTIC INTERPRETATION: A TOOL FOR CLINICAL SUPERVISION

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A lawyer friend of mine described a classroom she had visited while looking for a school for her daughter. "It was a wonderful place," she said. "There were plants everywhere, and hamsters and fish. There were bird feeders at the window. The teacher is this wonderful, warm, caring person. You can tell she really likes the kids and what she is doing. The students were all busy doing lots of different things. One boy was reading a book in a partitioned section of the room designed to be a place to send kids when they are being disciplined. The teacher laughed when I asked what the kid had done, and said that the area was never used for discipline, but that some kids liked to go there to work or read in private. You know," my friend concluded, "It didn't even look like a classroom."

My friend didn't send her daughter to that school. How odd, I thought, when she had described the place in such glowing tones and said that it was wonderful. What had influenced her decision?

Dr. Noreen Garman has spent years collecting similarly vivid descriptions of "typical" classrooms, teachers and supervisors from graduate education students in her instructional supervision classes. Let me read to you a description of one of those "typical" teachers. This one is a Catholic nun. "There is no

doubt in her mind, or in any of the students' that anyone would dare question her word. To do so would be comparable to treason and result in an eternity of wandering with the other lost souls. She is wearing her habit, composed of yards of blackness, cinched at the waist with a rosary and crowned with a white headdress (a symbol of her purity, no doubt).[1] She runs her classroom with concepts of strict, rigid rules with no idea of humanitarianism."

Who is this a description of: one of the writer's elementary school teachers or the wicked stepmother queen from Snow White? What wonderful language in the description: The woman has the power to commit children to hopeless eternity and is dressed not in clothing but only in "blackness" and a white crown. Surely she is a character from some fabulous tale, not your ordinary elementary school teacher.

Both of these descriptions are examples of a fascinating kind of usually unacknowledged knowledge that we all have about educational experience. I have defined that knowledge as educational myth.

Being able to recognize and understand educational myth is important for anyone with an interest in the field of education. In my dissertation I contend, however, that it is particularly important for supervisors to be aware that educational myth exists and has an affect on how educational settings are perceived and judged, and also for supervisors to have ways to identify when myth is influencing perceptions and judgments of actual educational settings.

That supervisors' evaluations of teaching behavior are influenced by factors of wnich the supervisor may not be conscious is certainly not a new idea. Morris Cogan, for example, stated the point well in 1973 when he wrote that "The supervisor needs to understand the forces within himself that shape his professional judgment." Educational myth is one such force.

So how is a supervisor to gain an understanding of educational myth and an awareness of its effects on perceptions and judgments of educational experience? I propose that it is by having the tools of specific language and strategies for interpreting educational myth. By interpreting educational myths -- those held by the supervisor and by the teacher -- a supervisory relationship can evolve that goes beyond operational attention to the events of the classroom. A relationship can develop in which the supervisor and the teacher seek the meanings classroom events have for them. In other words, teacher and supervisor create the "colleagueship" or "colleagiality" that Cogan describes as the basis of a clinical supervisory relationship.

What are the tools for interpreting educational myth and its effects? Educational scholars who have identified the role of interpretive studies in educational research have begun to explore answers to this question. Notable among these scholars are Eisner, Garman, Pinar, Sergiovanni. Jonas Soltis has described the work of these scholars and researchers. He says, "This segment of educational research takes its work to be inquiry into human intersubjective meaning so that we can understand how education initiates us into our culture." As

other scholars have pointed out, myth is an important vehicle for communicating and transmitting cultural norms and mores.

Soltis also points in the methodological direction of hermeneutics as providing a valuable research context for interpretive studies. Thomas Sergiovanni has explored the application of hermeneutics to discover what educational phenomena mean to the persons involved in them. Garman and Haggerson, too have been applying hermeneutic methodologies in their educational research efforts. And, not surprisingly, so have I applied hermeneutics in my study of educational myth, specifically my dissertation study of the "mythic" descriptions of educational settings by 68 of Garman's graduate education students.

Briefly described, hermeneutics is the study of methods and principles of interpretation, particularly the interpretation of language works or "texts." The goal of the hermeneutic process is to discover the meanings in the work being examined. Hermeneutics focuses on interpretation at two levels: one a practical methodological level, and the other a philosophical level. This second focus of hermeneutics distinguishes it from analysis. In analysis the relationship of the researcher to the work is to consider himself separate from the work and to envision his role as uncovering meanings that are an intrinsic part of the work. In the hermeneutic process, on the other hand, the researcher engages in what has been described as a "thinking dialogue with the text" creating a new frame of reference or

"world," to use Heideggers term, within which meanings emerge from the interaction of the researcher with the work. Thus the meanings revealed by the hermeneutic processs are contextually determined. They are the product of a particular researcher with a particular work at a particular time and are defensible as valid within the context of the world within which they came to be.

Before you conclude that I have strayed far from the point that supervisors need to have the tools for recognizing and interpreting educational myth, let me say that the process of clinical supervision contains within itself significant elements of the hermeneutic process I have described, and is therefore an appropriate supervisory model that can be used by supervisors who would explore educational myth.

In the first place, in clinical supervision, the relationship between teacher and supervisor is based on colleagiality. The colleagial relationship allows for the development of meaning out of the context of the particular relationship of teacher, supervisor and the teacher's classroom. This is consistent with the hermeneutic position that meaning and understanding evolve when one is open to them and when one is open to the creation of language that frames meaning and understanding. Such a mind set is a necessary one for the exploration of educational myth.

Secondly, clinical supervision is a process in which the initial experience of the classroom situation provides the source for observation data that record various perspectives from which the

classroom situation can be viewed. Examples of such records are audio and video tapes, transcripts, instruments such as the Flanders Interaction Analysis, and supervisors' notes. These observation records become the basis for a process of hermeneutic interpretation in which teacher and supervisor use the records not as the end product of supervision, say for evaluation of the teacher, but as descriptive material, the meaning and understanding of which will be pursued in post-observation analysis. As the teacher and supervisor review these records they enter into a hermeneutic circle by creating new interpretation of the events and of their meanings that allow for further revisiting and interpretation of the records and the classroom itself. At one such level of interpretation educational myth can be identified and explored.

Finally, the goal of clinical supervision is to produce knowledge in the form of understanding that is useful for the improvement of a teacher's instructional ability. Similarly, the goal of the hermeneutic process is to produce new levels of knowledge and understanding. Educational myth can be one such form.

I was thrilled last year (1985) at AERA when in his keynote address Jerome Bruner used a hermeneutic process in his discussion of models of the learner. I am encouraged by Dr. Bruner's sanction of the appropriateness of the hermeneutic process in educational scholarship and research. I offer my thought and research on clinical supervisors' application of hermeneutics in exploring educational myth as another example of hermeneutics' value and appropriateness in educational research.

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THE STUDY OF STEREOTYPE AS A SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

This paper will explore the phenomenon of stereotype as a knowledge-source and the usefulness of explication and argumentation as modes of inquiry into stereotype.

Introduction

My decision to study stereotype as a topic for scholarly research developed from personal experience and reports from other professional women I encountered who voiced the same concerns about the lack of female advancement within the workplace hierarchy. As I discussed this with other women, I found that although the individual settings and background events differed, the perceived barriers among the women were similar. It seemed that many of the reasons offered for refusing to consider women for higher level positions related not to the individual's ability but to a perceived notion regarding the role of working women. I informally began to test out my theory by speaking with women, regardless of background or position level. Women related tales of similar experiences. They expressed the frustration of having to disprove the inaccurate perception before they could begin to prove their competence.

While collecting these personal anecdotes and experiences (which I dubbed "Incredible Tales"), I researched journal articles and current event literature for further information on the topics generated by my colleagues. The literature affirmed the notions suggested by the women - stereotypes seemed to be affecting decision-making as it related to women and job promotion. The match between the personal anecdotal data and research findings indicated a need for the explication of individual stereotypes regarding women and promotion. The implications for educators in recognizing the operation and impact of such phenomena in the curriculum and classroom setting was the end purpose of this research.

How Can We Study Stereotype?

At the beginning of my study, I naively believed that I could gather data and study the notion of stereotype merely by surveying for this information directly from individuals. I quickly came to realize that this mode of inquiry was not feasible. The essence of stereotype is unobtrusive, often insidious. It is not open to verbalization upon request. Sometimes it operates at an unconscious level. For this reason, I chose a conceptual research mode in order to generate a construal of stereotype that could be identified and discussed. A construal is a "picture" of a complex, often incomprehensible

entity that is depicted in a manageable form in order to talk about and carry out practice on the issue under study. (Garman, 1983).

In the process of generating a construal of stereotype, I employed an instrumental approach in my modes of inquiry. An instrumental approach is one which uses language as an instrument to articulate, communicate, and lend meaning to an issue. The two major modes of inquiry employed in this study were Explication and Argument.

Explication is a process whereby the researcher begins with a construct in a particular field of study. The construct is initially vague until scholars in the field explicate the meaning through subsequent research and writing. Through explication, the construct takes on more particular definition by delineation of concepts, subconcepts, properties and exemplars.

As the data is gathered regarding the notion of stereotype, the data is categorized and analyzed until a conceptual framework which is the substantive theory results. This substantive theory then becomes the explication of the stereotype.

Toward a Definition of Stereotype

Myth and stereotype are related in that each phenomenon is usually accompanied by an emotion or reaction that carries a

positive or negative valence. Although it is impossible to clearly define and describe myth, it is possible to identify critical aspects of myth. It is possible to distinguish emotions and feelings in one's language or actions that give indications of the presence of a mythic image.

In this study, this evidence was provided through the presence of stereotypes regarding women and promotion. These stereotypes, in turn, suggested the operation of a larger, more pervasive myth impacting upon working women. This "umbrella" phenomenon, out of which operate the stereotypes involving women and promotion, can be simply described as the "myth regarding the life-role of women."

Stereotype is not something that can be directly surveyed on a questionnaire. It is an attitude that is insidiously woven into our language and belief system. It is depicted in conversation and in subsequent behavior which may be directly related to a stereotypic belief. Colwill, 1982, describes a stereotype as a special kind of attitude and belief. The following tale, taken from the chapter "Attitudes, Beliefs, and Behavior," Josephson and Colwill, 1982, demonstrates how attitudes and stereotypes are not necessarily based on facts.

One of the authors tells how she had attended a Social Issues in Business Class and the class topic was women in management. One male student challenged a female manager with the statement,

"Well, you can hardly expect businessmen to hire women into management positions. They're too unreliable." After being confronted with facts, research studies and statistics proving just the opposite, the student rejoined, "I'm sure all that is true, but you certainly can't deny that women are less reliable than men."

Josephson and Colwill go on to define stereotype as the belief that a certain group of people possess certain predictable characteristics and that stereotyping is a type of categorization scheme that allows people to make sense of the world in which they live. King, 1973 defines stereotype as an exaggerated belief associated with a category. Its function is to justify (rationalize) our conduct in relation to that category. This definition points to the interrelatedness of stereotypes, images and myths.

For purposes of this study, I chose to make a distinction between the term stereotype and a dysfunctional stereotype. I defined a dysfunctional stereotype to be any commonplace situation, example, or accepted convention in society but which is no longer practical, workable, or legitimate. Additionally, a dysfunctional stereotype often carries a negative response and may result in a negative reaction toward the individual it is purported to represent.

The Data Accumulation Process

The data I compiled for this study was of four main types. Personal tales and anecdotes comprise one data source. These were stories of personal experiences involving stereotype regarding women and promotion. These stories were later dubbed "incredible tales" because they usually began with comments such as, "Wait till you hear this..." or "You won't believe this..." Current Event Literature was a second major source of data. This category included newspaper and magazine articles, novels, and other current literature covering women's issues. Contemporary Comic Sources was a third source of data on stereotype. Even though this data source is in a lighter and humorous vein, cartoons and jokes portray issues of current importance and significance to our culture. Research and Conceptual Studies was a fourth source of data used in this study. This area included any empirical studies and conceptual writings related to the issue of women and stereotypes affecting promotion.

Because the data in this study is a picture and representation of the time period during which I engaged in these activities, the iterative feature of data gathering and analysis is pronounced and unique. I could not accurately refer to data "collection" as such in this research. The first three data sources involve data that cannot be actively sought out. Personal anecdotes, news articles, comic sources relating to the issues of stereotyping are types of data that occur spontaneously

- they do not represent data that can be predicted or called forward upon will. Therefore, during the life of this study, the data accumulation process was an ongoing activity. As the researcher, I had to allow for the time necessary for the data to accumulate. Although I was not able to cause this data to occur, I was able to actively pursue sources which would provide me with this data. The data gathering process did consist of specific, regular activities but due to the nature of the data, I could not label this phase "data collection" as in the traditional sense. I have chosen to call the process data accumulation because the word accumulation more accurately connotes a gathering type of activity.

In terms of data analysis, the four types of data sources had varying degrees of usefulness in the explication of the stereotypes. Research studies yielded the least helpful information regarding the essence of the stereotypes. Current event literature and contemporary comic sources provided more information regarding the nature of stereotype but these sources lacked the thick description as to the meaningfulness and impact of the stereotypes on women and promotion.

After considerable data analysis, I found that the personal anecdotes embodied in the Incredible Tales really held the key to the essence of stereotype. The incredible tales succinctly categorized the individual stereotypes in a way that the printed data sources could not.

Explication of the Stereotypes Regarding Women and Promotion

As a result of data accumulation and data analysis, I was able to identify five major stereotypes regarding women and promotion. An all-encompassing and over-riding category that impacted on all of these stereotypes emerged from my analysis. This category was difficult to describe and define while the individual stereotypes were not. This over-riding category eventually emerged as the myth regarding the stereotyped life-role of women. The stereotypes then emerged as traces of the life-role myth.

THE MYTH - The Stereotyped Life-Role of Women

The five stereotypes which are traces of the mythic view:

1. Women are unwilling or unable to handle management positions due to external factors (e.g. women are not mobile, the job requires long hours,etc.)

2. Women are biologically unfit for management

3. Women are only temporary employees

4. Management is unable to find qualified women

5. Women are taking needed jobs from men

Argumentation of the Stereotypes and Implications for Educational Remedy

Myth and stereotype, elements which influence and are influenced by our culture, are strongly reliant upon language to transmit and maintain the essence of themselves. As such, it is appropriate that explication and argumentation be used as modes of inquiry into stereotype since both of these approaches are language-based.

This study used the jurisprudence model in the argumentation of each of the stereotypes regarding women and promotion. The formal definition of argument was derived from Black's Dictionary of Law:

> Argument is an effort to establish belief by a course of reasoning. In rhetoric and logic, an inference is drawn from premises, the truth of which is indisputable, or at least, highly probable. (Black, 1968, p. 137)

The implications for educational remedy addressed in this study touched on the impact of early socialization and factors in elementary and secondary schools which influence and promote stereotyping. The major focus for educational recommendations however, addressed higher education since this area would have a more direct impact on adult behavior and learning. Emphasis on

change at this level would most expeditiously alter behavior in the workplace for both men and women.

Readers interested in a more in-depth review of the findings of this study are referred to the following document:

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KEY CONCEPTS AND DEFINITONS

ARGUMENTATION: An effort to establish belief by a course of reasoning. In rhetoric and logic, an inference is drawn from premises, the truth of which is indisputable, or at least, highly probably. (Black, 1968, p. 137).

DATA ACCUMULATION: Refers to the process in which I engaged in order to seek out the data for this research. The sources for this data included personal tales and anecdotes, excerpts from popular literature and comic sources, and research studies and conceptual writings. Although the data was not of the type that could be produced or generated, it was possible to actively and regularly engage in data researching by persuing printed materials, reviewing popular and empirical literature, and encouraging contacts with individuals who might provide potential data in the area of personal anecdotal experiences.

DYSFUNCTIONAL STEREOTYPE: Any commonplace situation, example, or accepted convention in society but which is no longer practical, workable or legitimate. Additionally, a dysfunctional stereotype often carries a negative response and may result in a negative reaction toward the individual it is purported to represent.

INCREDIBLE TALES: a title used to describe personal stories and anecdotes which embody information that is rich in the language of stereotype regarding women and promotion. So named because most of the stories begin with statements such as "You won't believe this..." or "Wait till you hear this..."

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Using Conceptual Research Methods to Generate
an Educational Construal of Teacher Professional Development

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Background of the Study

From August, 1977, to May, 1978, the length of one school year, six teachers in a rural western Pennsylvania school district partitipated in a teacher inservice education project in a manner not typical in public schools. The teachers were invited by the administrative staff of their school district to develop a model for staff development for the school district. They were released from their usual teaching assignments for the year for this purpose. The six teachers, joined by a university specialist in curriculum and supervision, formed a team and took on the responsibility of planning, implementing and evaluating their own development as they designed a model for professional development.

As the team of teachers involved themselves in the project, the nature of their involvement and their understanding of the project evolved. They began the project as somewhat of a faculty committee to develop a staff development model for the school district. By the close of the school year, they had established an identity in the district as the Learning Team. They referred to their year-long project as a Team Sabbatical and to their group involvement as an Organic Team. They named the experiences, the activities and their products, a Model for Professional Development.

What is novel about the experience of these teachers is that they were given the responsibility for their own teacher development. The administrators gave the teachers time, encouragement and the authority to plot their

own course for teacher inservice development. Another remarkable facet of this experience is that the teachers engaged in the project as a team. Six individual teachers with the participation of a specialist skilled in clinical supervision, merged their time and conscious efforts for the purpose of learning and engaging in professional development. The Learning Team submitted a final report to their Board of School directors in which they made two evocative statements. First, given time, team support, and administrative and peer encouragement, "teachers are capable of directing their own learning without traditional guides." Second, the accomplishments of the Learning Team, "can represent a powerful in-service research model."

In the Fall of 1982, I was in search of a research topic which could yield a dissertation. My area of practice was then and continues to be, teacher pre-service education and development. My graduate study was in the area of supervision and curriculum development. From Morris Cogan, my academic advisor until his retirement, and from Noreen Garman, my current research advisor, I had developed a background and strong interest in clinical supervision. Dr. Garman suggested that the experience of these six teachers, the Learning Team, had implications for teacher development and for clinical supervision. She invited me to attempt what she called a retroductive study--an investigation of events from the past in search of, "significant signs and insights." The study could be done by using conceptual research methods and Dr. Garman introduced me to the Study Group.

Underlying Assumptions of Naturalistic Inquiry

I list for you here the major underlying assumptions of naturalistic inquiry which influenced my thinking and gave direction to my study. These are drawn from the writing of Bogdan and Taylor, Miles and Huberman, and Owens.

1. The aim of conceptual research is to understand, not to generalize, to predict, or to control.

2. The audience participates in naturalistic generalization. Interpretive work is intersubjective. The audience reading an interpretive study personally generalizes from what is being read to their own case.

3. The written word is important both in collecting data and in reporting the research.

4. The naturalistic inquirer uses a design that unfolds over time and which is never complete until the inquiry is arbitrarily terminated because of constraints of time or resources.

5. The researcher analyzes data inductively by building abstractions from the particulars that have been gathered and grouped together. Theory emerges from the bottom up. In Glaser's terms, theory is grounded.

The Research Process and Some Procedures

Data collection was done by conducting interviews with each of the major participants in the Team Sabbatical. At the time of interview I requested the participants' private collections where these still existed. Interviewing and transcribing techniques from the oral history tradition were useful to me.

From the documents and transcribed interviews I developed a chronology or time-line of events which served as an outline for the reconstruction of events. Here I turned to the discipline of histroiography for decision rules as I prepared a reconstruction of events. I submitted a copy of the Reconstruction to all the participants for verification and approval.

Using the Reconstruction, revised from the suggestions of the participant-readers, I developed an Interpretation. I told the story again, this time in a molecular style describing the process and the interactions by which the Learning Team members organized their activities.

At this point I made a premature attempt to begin to theorize. I dis-

covered that the data as organized in the Interpretation was too massive to deal with. I just could not translate it to theory. I began the process of data reduction. From Goode and Hatt I learned the technique known as qualitative coding, which allows the researcher to condense the data by transforming it, working toward theoretical conclusions. Using the Interpretation, I excised from the processes and interactions, what Karl Weick calls, interacts. Interacts are behaviors of persons which are contingent on the behaviors of other persons. These I organized and labeled using qualitative coding. The data had been reduced, the content of experience distilled to five essential elements of the Learning Team experience. The result I refer to as the Reinterpretation.

At this point I turned to the literature on teacher inservice, staff development and professional development. I needed to discover whether the Reinterpretation with its five essential elements was in accord with what is known by others. Miles and Huberman refer to this as checking for representativeness. The researcher samples randomly within the universe of people and phenomena under study in search of confirming instances. This becomes the basis for naturalistic generalization. I used the Review of Literature to corroborate my findings.

Having uncovered the essential elements of the Learning Team experience and shown that my findings were in accord with the findings of other researchers, I was able to formulate the five essential elements of the Learning Team experience as an educational construal of the Model for Professional Development. This became the concluding chapter of my document.

Outcomes

I believe that this study documents the role of the clinical supervisor in teacher professional development.

I believe that this study documents the role that teachers can take in their own professional development. Six teachers, individuals who today describe themselves as quite typical teachers were permitted, in Shanker's words, "to operate fairly independently, to make decisions, to exercise discretion, to be free of most direct supervision."

I believe that my contribution is to have prepared the research report using qualitative methods and rendering the report credible, verifiable and, above all, readable.

KEY CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

NATURALISTIC INQUIRY: According to Robert G. Owens (1982) naturalistic inquiries:

1. primarily employ direct contact between investigators and actors in the situation as a means of collecting data,
2. use emergent strategies to design the study rather than a priori specification,
3. develop data categories from examination of the data themselves after collection, and
4. do not attempt to generalize the findings to a universe beyond that bounded by the study.

CASE STUDY: According to Goode and Hatt (1952) the case study is, "a way of organizing social data so as to preserve the unitary character of the social object being studied. . .Almost always, this means of approach includes the development of that unit." Stake (1980) says that the case study, "provides a cognitive experience which may be more easily integrated into a reader's existing experience than a quantitative record."

NATURALISTIC GENERALIZATION: A case study, as inquiry into a single situation or set of situations is, as Stake (1978) says, a poor basis for generalizations. There is the need for typicality and representativeness, "for assurance that the target case is properly described." As readers recognize essential similarities to cases of interest to them, they establish the basis for naturalistic generalization. "Naturalistic generalization is arrived at by recognizing the similarities of objects and issues in and out of context and by sensing the natural covariation of happenings."

ORGANIC TEAM: As defined by the Learning Team, this is, "a working unit which derives its specific activities and results in an unfolding manner that leads to emerging new and unpredictable states. The results of the team members' work are not usually specified and designed before the group forms, but instead grow out of the potential within each member, the conditions of the evolving experience and the conscious awareness by the group members of the model building process they, individually and collectively, represent."

PROFESSIONAL: According to Albert Shanker (1985) "A professional is a person who is an expert, and by virtue of that expertise is permitted to operate fairly independently, to make decisions, to exercise discretion, to be free of most direct supervision. . . .The realization of authentic professionalism for teachers will require a second revolution in American public education. . ."

TEAM SABBATICAL: Within the Revere Model for Professional Development, the team sabbatical is a vehicle for teacher professional development. This vehicle has five essential components:

1. The school district supplies the required raw materials and resources for the team sabbatical.
2. Teachers acting on self-authority are the engine of this vehicle. They accept leadership responsibility by choosing to act in their own behalf and by becoming the active agents of their own learning.
3. The administrators, the consultant and the teachers are all accessible to one another and open to the change processes. Growing and developing is a common goal.

4. The context in which the sabbatical evolves is the joint creation of administrators, school board, consultant and teachers. The support structure of the team is the greenhouse for the teachers' growth.
5. The teachers' adult learning involvement addresses educational concepts and principles as well as the attitudes and feelings attached to learning experiences. Experience is a valued source of learning.

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APPENDIX A

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING QUALITY RESEARCH

VERITE: Does the work ring true? Is it consistent with accepted knowledge in the field? or if it departs does it address why? Does it fit within the context of the literature? Is it intellectually honest and authentic?

INTEGRITY: (as in architecture). Is the work structurally sound? Does it hang together? In a piece of research, is the design or research rationale logical, appropriate, and identifiable within a paradigm?

RIGOR: Is there sufficient depth of intellect, rather than superficial or simplistic reasoning?

UTILITY: Usefulness, professionally relevant. Does it make a contribution to the field? Does the piece have a clearly recognizable professional audience?

VITALITY: Is it important, meaningful - non-trivial? Does it have a sense of vibrancy, intensity, excitement of discovery? Is the proper personae (or voice) used for the researcher or author? Do metaphors, images, or visuals communicate powerfully?

AESTHETICS: Is it enriching, pleasing to anticipate and experience? Does it give me insight into some universal part of my educational self? Does it touch my spirit in some way?

APPENDIX B

THE CONCEPTUAL RESEARCH STUDY GROUP

The Conceptal Research Study Group had its inception in 1980 as several of us in the Curriculum and Supervision Program at the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Education approached the dissertation phase of our doctoral work. The impetus for the Study Group came from Dr. Noreen Garman, our advisor, who was committed to two ideas. First was her abiding belief in the power and value of organic learning groups. Second was her conviction that education as a discipline is undergoing a fundamental shift in its research paradigm. With these ideas in mind, she invited several of us to join a group to learn with her about non-quantitative approaches to research. We would learn by reading, by discussion, and most importantly, by working on our overviews and dissertations. In addition to having the same advisor, those of us who joined the group had two other characteristics in common—we wanted our dissertations to be personally and professionally meaningful, and we were groping for a legitimate alternative to experimental research. From these nebulous beginnings, the Study Group was created.

As we began to meet, we did not have a language to describe what we were learning, or for that matter, what we were doing. We did not establish learning objectives in the classical, behavioral mode, for none of us, including Noreen, knew the content and skills to be learned. Our objective was simply to finish our dissertations. Our commitment was to learn whatever was necessary to accomplish that objective. Our primary asset was a faith in ourselves, in each other, and in the process of learning together.

Over time, the group expanded. We were joined by Dr. Nelson Haggerson, our visiting scholar and friend from Arizona State University. Nelson had guided the doctoral work of students who had used a grounded theory method in dissertations. We were joined by other doctoral students in Curriculum and Supervision as they entered the dissertation process. More recently, we were joined by Dr. Helen Hazi and Dr. Kathy Ammon, who had already completed their dissertations and wanted to participate in several writing projects the Group was undertaking.

The group was very loosely structured. Participation was voluntary and members came to meetings or skipped them as their needs dictated. We met at Noreen's house, usually getting started around 7:30 p.m. and ending about 11:00. If one of us needed individual attention, we might arrive earlier to spend extra time with Noreen. The agenda was rarely preset. Generally the meetings began with exchanges about how the process was going or how we were feeling. "I can't stand it!" or "This is driving me crazy!" or "Tve been so stuck, I haven't done anything for two weeks!"—these were common expressions of anxiety. Less common, but equally important were shared bursts of enthusiasm and excitement as a breakthrough occurred, a milestone was passed. There was never a time limit set on these exchanges. It just seemed that after 30 or 40 minutes, the conversation turned towards more substantive research ideas and tasks. During some

meetings, Noreen would bring in several new articles or review new ideas she had gleaned from conversations or share drafts of articles she was writing on conceptual research. At other meetings, several of us might report on our research activities—asking questions, trying out ideas, getting feedback. Just as often, someone might come in with a very specific question, and those of us who had already struggled with the issue would share how we had dealt with it. No one was told what to do or how to do things. We gave each other food for thought, support, and faith to go on.

In time, the Study Group meetings also came to include celebrations as eventually we began to finish our dissertations. It was as though each of us was running a long distance marathon, but we were not competing with each other. As one of us crossed the finish line, those behind paused, offering congratulations, sharing in the sense of accomplishment, renewing hope that the end could be reached. And those who were finished did not turn away; they stayed—cheering, encouraging and coaching the others.

As we progressed through the dissertation process, all of us acknowledged the value of the study group. We did not, however, have much time to reflect on the nature of its contribution to our progress. The preceding notes are meant to give a sense of how the group was structured, what we did and what we meant to each other. We encourage others to consider forming such a group. The following comments relate a little more specifically some of the benefits each of us feel we gained from the Group.

The following comments on the study group experience come from the members of the study group. After the comments were collected, they were then clustered under major headings that indicate the general categories of benefit of the study group. It is interesting to note that in almost all cases, study group members ended up with comments in each category, suggesting our shared perceptions of the value of the study group experience.

EXPLORING RESEARCH ISSUES

A support group where I can learn more about research, discuss my own research and learn how to direct others in the research process.

Gaining familiarity with research terms.

An opportunity to formulate the rationale for my conceptual research in a supportive, yet critical group.

An opportunity to understand the nuances of the research paradigm.

Privided an arena for collecting and exchanging important articles relating to conceptual research.

Provided an ongoing opportunity to get feedback on each phase of the research as it progressed.

Provided a double edged research situation, since members were not only conducting their independent studies, but were also studying the nature of conceptual research.

The study group served as a forum within which to develop a lexicon for conceptual research. (We have charged ourselves, however, to remain vigilant against the dangers of exclusionary language.)

Forum for my ideas: explanation theory related to curriculum theory and description of my use of continuous comparative analysis.

PROVIDING PERSONAL SUPPORT

Sharing of concerns--both in the intellecual pursuits and in the emotional realm.

Affirmation of the scholarly part of me by people who shared rather than disparaged my values about research and the dissertation process.

A mechanism for seeing myself in the process; for sorting out my

own idiosyncrasies from the nature of the process. To get re-energized rather than wallow in my blocks.

The study group provided me with support and reassurance about what is "normal" in the dissrtation process.

Provided a sympathetic support group for members suffering through research anxieties.

Provided an enjoyable social setting that combined stimulating conversation with good food and drink.

ENCOURAGING SCHOLARLY DEVELOPMENT

Identification of relevant theoretical literature and processing what it meant.

Refinement of ideas; honing of concepts.

Exchanging of materials on content and methodology.

A place to make a contribution, to use what I was learning to help others learn; a place to have a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment.

The study group for me represents "the university" in the finest sense of the work, i.e., a community of scholars engaged in mutual learning and discovery.

The study group has helped alleviate dissertation post-partum by providing a forum for continued scholarship, publication and professional application of dissertation learning.

The study group satisfies my need to share the insights and experiences of the research and conceptualization process.

The study has provided feedback and questions to help me refine and clarify ideas.

The study group has been a valuable source for new and/or related references and concepts.

The study group satisfies a basic need I have as an educator to pass learning on, to perpetuate a cycle of learning.

The study group has evolved from a social/support oriented group for me to one that is goal and task oriented. This new orientation makes it possible for the sutdy group to make new kinds of contributions to conceptual research and to reach a larger audience than ourselves.